

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LAW AND JUSTICE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3663
ANSWERED ON:25.08.2006
LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO POOR
Reddy Shri Karunakara G.

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of people benefited from the Legal Aid Scheme since its inception, State-wise;
- (b) the income limit prescribed to get assistance from Legal Aid Scheme;
- (c) whether there is any move to raise the income limit for providing legal aid to the poor; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY):

- (a) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House as and when received.
- (b) Under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, persons belonging to weaker sections such as, a member of scheduled caste or scheduled tribe, a victim of trafficking in human beings or beggar as referred to in Article 23 of the Constitution, a woman, child, a mentally ill or otherwise disabled person, and industrial workman, etc. are entitled to free legal aid and assistance. As regards other categories of persons, initially every person whose annual income was not exceeding Rs. 9,000 had been eligible for free legal aid in cases coming before High Courts and Courts subordinate thereto. In cases before the Supreme Court, the limit was fixed at Rs. 12,000 earlier and now the income ceiling has been raised by the Central Government to Rs. 50,000. In regard to cases before the High Court and Courts subordinate thereto, a decision has been taken at the fourth Annual Meet of the State Legal Services Authority held under the aegis of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) on 29-02-2004 and 01-03-2004 at Kolkata to raise the income ceiling in terms of Section 12(h) of the Legal Services Act, 1987 (as amended) to Rs 50,000.
- (c) and (d) No such proposal as of now.